

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION**

**GRANTS AND COMMUNITY  
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

**Wednesday, April 10, 2024  
8:35 PM ( Approximately)**

Chairperson: Maggie Harper Epstein  
Vice Chairperson: Ray Courtney, Andrew Gavrin

AGENDA

1. **AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE PHILADELPHIA SKATING CLUB**



## **AGENDA ITEM INFORMATION**

### **ITEM: AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE A LETTER OF SUPPORT TO THE PHILADELPHIA SKATING CLUB**

Consider for recommendation to the Board of Commissioners authorizing the issuance of a Letter of Support to the Philadelphia Skating Club and Human Society for a COVID-19 ARPA Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program grant application.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

<b>Description</b>	<b>Type</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Issue Briefing - Phila Skate Club Letter of Support	Issue Briefing
<input type="checkbox"/> Phila Skate Club Request for Letter of Support	Backup Material

**TOWNSHIP OF LOWER MERION**

*Grants and Community Development Committee*

**Issue Briefing**

**Topic:** Issuance of a Letter of Support to the Philadelphia Skating Club & Human Society for a COVID-19 ARPA Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program grant application.

**Prepared By:** Brandon Ford, Assistant Township Manager

**Date:** April 1, 2024

**I. Action To Be Considered By The Board:**

To consider authorizing the issuance of a letter of support to the Philadelphia Skating Club and Human Society for inclusion in the Society’s COVID-19 ARPA Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program grant application.

**II. Why This Issue Requires Board Consideration:**

A letter of support to state agencies should be authorized by the Board of Commissioners.

**III. Current Policy Or Practice (If Applicable):**

In the past, the Township has issued letters of support for grant applications submitted by non-Township entities that acts to further Township goals.

**IV. Other Relevant Background Information:**

In March 2024, a request was received from the Philadelphia Skating Club and Human Society for a Letter of Support from the Township to include in the Society’s grant application to the COVID-19 ARPA Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program.

The Society seeks grant funding from the program to assist in the financing of a \$6.5 Million capital project it hopes to initiate in the near future. Originally built in 1937, the Society’s facility in Ardmore serves the general public through many programs including Public Skating, Learn to Skate, Special Olympics, Annual Community Day free skating, holiday activities, and rentals. The improvements being sought by the Society would (1) replace the roof and skylights, replace the ice-making and associated HVAC systems, and modernize common areas to provide ADA access to restrooms and social spaces.

**V. Impact On Township Finances: None**

**VI. Staff Recommendation:** Letters of Support of this nature are a policy decision and staff does not have a position on whether the Society’s request should be granted.



Philadelphia Skating Club and Humane Society  
220 Holland Avenue, Ardmore, PA 19003  
Phone: 610-642-8700  
Email: [pschs@pschs.org](mailto:pschs@pschs.org)  
Website: [pschs.org](http://pschs.org)

February 20, 2024

Mr. Ernie McNeely  
Township Manager  
Township of Lower Merion  
75 East Lancaster  
Ardmore, PA 19003

Dear Ernie,

As a follow-up to a meeting with Chris Leswing on February 14<sup>th</sup>, we invite you to learn about a multi-phase \$6.5M capital project necessary to retain the Philadelphia Skating Club and Humane Society (PSCHS) in Ardmore.

We have spent the past few years planning and the past year fundraising, with \$1.3 million raised from private donors, including \$25,000 from Lower Merion Township.

Our request to the Township has a short-term and a longer-term component. In the short term, we hope the Township will offer a letter of support for our inclusion in the COVID-19 ARPA Capital Projects Fund Multi-Purpose Community Facilities Program grant application, due April 20<sup>th</sup>.

Beyond that immediate action, we met with Senator Amanda Cappelletti's office, and she supports requesting RACP capital appropriation for the project. Together with the Township's sponsorship, we can achieve our goals for the community. Our project also has support from the Ardmore Community Leaders and the Lower Merion Conservancy.

The building, built in 1937, was recently reviewed for structural soundness and retains most original structural aspects. The roof needs resurfacing, and the skylights (from 1936) have reached the end of life.

The facility serves the general public through many programs including Public Skating, Learn to Skate, Special Olympics, Annual Community Day free skating, holiday activities, rentals, and much more. Local, regional, and national visitors support the local businesses when they visit our facility. Moreover, it provides a safe space for recreation, especially for teenagers.

The PSCHS operations are financially stable; however, operating funds are insufficient for our immediate capital needs.

The project has three phases:

1. Replace the roof and skylights (targeted for summer of 2025)
  - a. Safety and structural integrity – in this absence, the facility will be forced to close
  - b. Energy efficiency (improve from R6 to R30)
  - c. Through multiple bids, we have selected a PA-based, WBE contractor for the Roof and Skylight replacement
2. Replace the ice-making system and associated HVAC
  - a. Environmental: The EPA is phasing out the R22 refrigerant we use – in the absence of this, the facility will be forced to close
  - b. Energy efficiency
  - c. Noise mitigation
3. Modernize common areas
  - a. Provide ADA access for bathrooms and community social spaces.

We welcome you to tour the facility and review our plans. We look forward to hearing from you on how the Lower Merion Township can help us keep the PSCHS a vibrant part of our community.

Sincerely,

Laura Mitchell  
President

Francis Mycek  
General Manager

CC: Brandon Ford, Assistant Township Manager  
Charles Doyle, Assistant Director of Planning  
Chris Leswing, Director of Building and Planning